GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:251
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2007
SMALL AND MEDIUM FARMERS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of small and medium farmers in the country, State-wise;

(b) the steps taken by the Government to improve their condition;

(c) whether the Government has developed any technique of low cost farming for such farmers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a): The percentage of small and medium farmers in the country, State-wise is annexed.

(b): The Government has taken a number of initiatives to improve the conditions of farmers including small and medium farmers;

i) A credit policy was announced to double flow of credit to the Agriculture sector in three years.
ii) From Kharif 2006-07 farmers are being provided crop loan upto Rs.3.00 lakh at 7% rate of interest.
iii) The banks have been advised to wave the margin/security requirement for agricultural loan upto Rs.50,000/-
iv) A package for revival of cooperative structure was announced.
v) National Horticulture Mission has been launched since 2005 for backward and forward linkages covering research, post harvest management, processing and marketing of products.
vi) A National Rainfed Area Authority has been set up to expand area under irrigation, improved water management with watershed development and rain harvesting.
vii) National Agricultural Insurance Scheme is implemented to protect the farmers against the crop losses due to natural calamities.
viii) Subsidy @ 25% cost with permissible ceiling limit is available to the farmers for purchase of various agricultural equipment including hand tools, bullock drawn/power driven implements, sprinkler and drip irrigation equipment, planting, reaping, harvesting and threshing equipment, tractors, power tillers and other specialized agricultural machines under the Centrally sponsored Scheme of Macro Management of Agriculture.

(c) to (e): A number of new technology equipment have been developed by ICAR, inter- alia, low cost manual/bullock driven implements, Bullock driven Integral Tool Bar, Bullock driven Multi crop planter, bullock driven seed-cum-fertilizer drill, bullock driven groundnut− cum-potato digger, low land manual rice seeder, groundnut-cum-castor decorticator, sickles, tubular maize sheller, weeder, paddle thresher, low lift pedal pump, manual fertilizer broadcaster, etc. for reducing the cost of farming and increasing the farmers income. Government is also promoting Integrated Pest Management for popularization of biological control of pests and need based and judicious use of pesticides that reduces the cost of cultivation. The agricultural marketing reforms launched by the Government by promoting direct marketing and contract farming also enhances the farmers` income by reducing post harvest losses and eliminating the middleman.